

The Wicked Wang-Pah Meets a Dragon

A CHINESE FANTASY IN THREE ACTS

BY

FLORALYN CADWELL

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CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY

CHORUS MAN

PROPERTY MAN

TU CHUN, *Viceroy of the Province*

WU SUN, *THE WANDERING MINSTREL, Viceroy's true son*

WANG-PAH (*Losing eight principles of decency*), *Viceroy's foster son*

MO LAN (*a fragrant Chinese blossom like a creamy lily with golden center*). *Viceroy's ward*

MEI YUNG (*Graceful one*) } *Maidens in attendance on MO LAN*
KO-TO (*Saucy one*) }

CHANG-NGO, *Goddess of the Moon*

ATTENDANTS ON MOON-GODDESS, *Four maidens*

FU WEI PING

KUAN YIN PING } *Guards*

CREATURES OF THE SEA, *Lobster, Fish, Clam, Turtle*

GUESTS OF VICEROY, *Four Mandarins*

ATTENDANTS AND SERVANTS, *Six*

COUNSELLOR OF VICEROY, *Old man with white whiskers*

LUNG, *Dragon*

Songs in "The Wicked Wang-Pah Meets a Dragon":

"A Word from the Wind."

"Plum Blossom."

"A World Apart" ("The Lady Moon is My Only Lover.")

The Music for "A Word from the Wind" and "A World Apart" was adapted from old Chinese airs and composed by Maj. Walter Waygrove of Honolulu.

The poems are reprinted from "A Feast of Lanterns" and "A Lute of Jade," by L. Cranmer-Byng and Dr. S. A. Kapadia, published by E. P. Dutton & Co., through whose kind permission they are here included.

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A WORD ABOUT STAGE AND SCENERY

This play resembles the conventional Chinese play, but modified enough by western stage convention to be attractive to the modern audience. For example, the Chinese orchestra should sit on the left (of the audience), facing the players, but instead of playing with the utmost zeal and drowning the words of the actors as is the Chinese custom, they should, in this play, perform only during exits and entrances, and during pauses. All actors should be "played on and off" the stage by appropriate music—the crash of the cymbals denoting any crisis or the entrance of any important masculine character.

According to Chinese conventions most of the scenery was imaginary and all changes of scenery and costume were made before the audience by the property man. But this play furnishes possibilities for very charming backgrounds in the way of moon-lit gardens, a deep-sea scene, etc., which will add to the pleasure of a western audience.

The large square trunk of the property man containing fans, cushions, parasols, costumes, and any necessary properties should be placed in full view at the back of the stage on the right of the audience, as is customary in all Chinese plays. On it may be piled extra tables and chairs. In the scene under the sea this box covered with canvas may serve as the rock on which the hero springs when hard pressed by the Dragon.

Heaven, whence the Moon-Goddess descends, is represented by a platform above the stage at the back on the right of the audience. The property man holds a ladder whenever it is necessary to ascend to or descend from Heaven.

SUGGESTIONS AS TO COSTUMES

All the characters of high rank are clad in gorgeous Chinese costumes of silk, heavily embroidered in gold and silver. The head-dresses are the extremely ornate ones of ancient China still used on the Chinese stage. The Moon-Goddess and all the maidens wear rich jewels and are heavily but delicately painted and powdered. Both men and women of high rank carry elaborate fans which are wielded according to the Chinese custom: up and down toward the face by the women and forward and back, sideways, by the men. The men's fans are large and dark in coloring. Some of them have poems inscribed on them. Those of the women are daintier in color and size. The women frequently cover the face with the fan until only the eyes look shyly forth. WANG PAH's make-up is striking, with black and red paint according to the Chinese custom. His walk is a dignified prance which the curved soles of the Chinese shoes serve to accentuate. The DRAGON is a fearful and gorgeous beast of scarlet, gold, and green; he is propelled by four or five boys inside. The boy who speaks for him uses a megaphone in order to enlarge his tones to the proper proportions. Punk is burnt in his nostrils to give the effect of smoke.

The MOON-GODDESS should be tall, of exceed-

6 THE WICKED WANG-PAH MEETS A DRAGON

ing grace and dignity, with an immense diadem on her head. She is clothed in shimmering silvery garments. Her maidens are of smaller stature, but are also graceful and wear shining robes.

The creatures of the sea are enlarged, grotesque representations which enclose small boys; that is all, except the white clam shell which opens to show a lovely little girl in pink dress. The fish is of red color, the turtle brown, and the lobster green.

The servants and attendants are dressed in duller colors. The Property Man is in black, while the Chorus Man is clad in scarlet and gold.

The Chorus Man is on the stage most of the time, but moves about and keeps out of the way of the players. Frequently he stands or sits down in front. The Property Man moves about lazily and hands properties to various players as they are needed. He sits on a large box of properties, crass-legged, at back of stage, when not needed; cracks melon seeds, smokes a cigarette, or seems to sleep.

THE WICKED WANG-PAH MEETS A DRAGON

THE PROLOGUE

(CHORUS MAN steps from between curtains at the back. Orchestra stops playing and announces him with grand crash.)

CHORUS MAN. Honorable greetings! To the unutterably inscrutable Heavens, I bow.

(Bows to right. Loud clang from orchestra.)

To the miraculously endowed Earth, I bow.

(Bows to left. Grand clang.)

To Man, the third of the Supreme Powers, I bow.

(Bows to center.)

For your insatiable curiosity which has brought you here tonight, I thank you.

(Bows.)

Before your celestial eyes shall be unfolded a tale of true love between the jade-like and irresistible maiden, Mo Lan, the ward of the exalted Viceroy, Tu Chun, and his son, the incomparable Wu Sun, who through a Demon was stolen from his royal home but who, through the intervention of the beneficent Moon-Goddess, lived and returned to his ancestral home in the guise of a wandering minstrel. This

8 THE WICKED WANG-PAH MEETS A DRAGON

malicious Demon has in the meantime substituted for the wondrous Wu Sun his own Demon progeny, the wicked Wang-Pah, who is all unknowingly reared by the gracious Tu Chun, who benevolently attributes the at times viciousness and maliciousness of his supposed son's disposition to the characteristics inherited from his so amiable mother and her august tribe. Now as Wang-Pah is approaching maturity, the august Tu Chun, to whom the people of his province are dear, conceives the idea that a marriage between his supposed son and his enchanting ward, Mo Lan, noted for the loveliness of her disposition, would help to mitigate the magnificent harshness of his Demon Son's nature, and make him more acceptable to his people.

(Shakes head sorrowfully.)

Alas! Man proposes and woman disposes. And from this play, which my actors will put before you in their crude and ignorant fashion, you will see how the wilful Mo Lan turns from the love of a magnificently endowed Prince to the mediocre love of a poor wandering minstrel.

(Lifts hand in commanding gesture.)

But before the ladies of the audience begin to weep behind their gilded fans, let me hasten to tell you that the poor wandering minstrel is no other than Wu Sun, the true heir of the magnanimous Viceroy, Tu Chun, and let me warn you that those magnificent garments worn by the Demon Prince cover a treacherous heart. Those beauteous oblique eyes have no more compassion in them than the eyes of the tiger, and his tongue is forked at the end like a serpent's tongue, to speak flowery lies instead of gracious truths. Ladies, beware!

THE WICKED WANG-PAH MEETS A DRAGON 9

Before going further, I wish to present to you the characters who will perform before you tonight.

(Claps hands, clang from orchestra, curtains open. Each character enters at right, parades across stage in a dignified and haughty manner, pausing center to bow three times as the CHORUS MAN did at first. Then exits left. After each bow the orchestra clangs. Orchestra announces each character with grand crash, the amount of noise depending on the importance of the character. Finally the CHORUS MAN speaks. TU CHUN enters, moving ponderously and with dignity.)

CHORUS MAN. Highest in rank and most magnificent in character, as is befitting to one of such high estate, I present the Viceroy, Tu Chun. The super-abundance of his adipose tissue indicates his superiority to all mundane cares. He may be fittingly compared to a chrysanthemum in his magnificent indifference to outward affairs.

(VICEROY makes three august bows. WANG-PAH enters right. He prances, but in a dignified way.)

Second only to the Viceroy is the heir apparent, the Demon-Prince whom I have purposely discussed before his appearance. Now it will suffice to call your attention to the superb insolence of his carriage and the haughty curve of his eyebrows, which are in accord with the high-minded depravity of his life. Do not forget what I have previously told you with regard to his character.

(WANG-PAH exits left. MO LAN enters shyly with fan over face, only eyes showing.)

10 THE WICKED WANG-PAH MEETS A DRAGON

Prepare to fill the sockets of your august eyes with a vision of celestial radiance, the loveliest maiden in Cathay; I may even say without exaggeration that any of the royal Princes would be fortunate could he win her hand.

(MO LAN *hesitates shyly.*)

(*To her*) I invite your jade toes to benignly approach.

(MO LAN *approaches.*)

Her eyebrows are like silhouettes of distant mountains and the hollows in her cheeks which you are pleased to call dimples are bewitching. Her feet are so tiny that they are invisible from where you are seated. I need not mention them.

(KO-TO and MEI YUNG follow, also with raised fans.)

The maidens accompanying her at a respectful distance are beautiful, too, but they will never have an opportunity to marry while their enchanting mistress remains single. Our fathers used to say, "Can you teach an intelligent horse to read and write? Well, then, if you cannot teach an intelligent horse, what can you expect to do with a woman?" But these maidens, as a result of the Viceroy's magnificent indifference to outward matters, have eaten of the knowledge that comes from the outer barbarian lands—and Mo Lan has the temerity to demand for herself some of the freedom of expression and choice which the uprisen sisterhood of the uncouth barbaric western tribes of the world now enjoy—in the matter of marriage. It is not without reason, however, that the "skirts and ornaments" are kept at the back



THE WICKED WANG PAH MEETS A DRAGON

THE WICKED WANG-PAH MEETS A DRAGON 11

of the house. Will you graciously betake your benign beings thence?

(Exit MO LAN and MAIDENS with modest dignity left. MINSTREL WU SUN enters right.)

Do not be deceived by the plain attire and humble attitude of this wandering minstrel. His voice is like the pealing of temple bells at sunset and his retentive mind is filled with innumerable songs and tales as is the West Wind of Autumn with leaves. As Confucius has said, "For improving manners and customs there is nothing like music." You will have the sublime opportunity of filling your magnanimous ears with his harmonious accents. Do not forget that though he is clad as a minstrel, he is in reality a prince, and that he wears the talisman of the Moon Goddess.

(Exit WU SUN left. The MOON GODDESS and four MAIDENS in gauzy garments appear, right, and dance in a dignified way for a moment. The CHORUS MAN is overcome with awe and bows very low three times.)

The Moon Goddess and her maidens. It is the season of the Moon Festival—when mortals who venerate the gods are sometimes vouchsafed glimpses of them in their dreams.

(MOON GODDESS and MAIDENS exit left. Four MANDARINS enter by twos.)

Here are the honorable guests of the Viceroy at the Festival of the Moon.

(COUNSELLOR of VICEROY enters.)

12 THE WICKED WANG-PAH MEETS A DRAGON

Behold the wisest of the Counsellors of the august Tu Chun, who will negate the old Chinese saying, "In spite of all the prayers in the world, there are three things a man can never attain at the same time, a son, wealth and whiskers."

(MANDARINS and COUNSELLOR *exit left*. GUARDS *enter*.)

Here are the giants who protect the august Viceroy. (*Clang of cymbals*.) They are uneducated and would stare at a wall, but when danger is near we rely on their strength and ferocity.

Now, in order to finish our play before the Lord of the Day shall drive his Golden Chariot into the spacious sky, I shall have the servants and attendants pass in swift procession before your benign orbs. Pardon their intrusion. I bow.

(*Bows*.)

(*All the other characters of the play, except DRAGON and the SEA CREATURES, pass in swift procession. PROPERTY MAN enters, cracking watermelon seeds with teeth, slipping a few into his mouth from time to time, saunters lazily and indifferently across stage. He does not bow or look at audience*.)

Here is one whom I would gladly omit from the program, yet one whom we cannot dispense with. He is a perfect embodiment of the Chinese proverb, "It is better to sit than to walk, it is better to lie down than to sit, and still better to sleep than to do either." I have had him clothed in black so that he will be as nearly invisible to your august eyes as possible. We cannot entirely dispense with him as he is needed

THE WICKED WANG-PAH MEETS A DRAGON 13

to move the furniture, change the scenes, and take care of the costumes. These duties he reluctantly performs in the intervals between eating and sleeping. His mind is only comparable to a wastepaper basket. As far as possible, I request you to ignore his ignominious presence.—I bow.

(PROPERTY MAN *seats himself at rear of room on box and lights cigarette*.)

Last, but by no means least, may I present my deferential being before you. "Though there are many books I have not read, may my deeds call forth no reproach." At unutterable expense have I collected the magnificently jewelled robes and the settings in which my players shall appear. All Cathay has been combed as with a fine-tooth comb in order to collect the ablest actors obtainable. I have, through weary hours, and with incredible patience, trained these actors who will appear before your benign orbs of seeing. Finally, with my own brush and my own hand have I written the superb play which it is your supreme pleasure to witness. If you observe any almost imperceptible deviations from the path of perfection, attribute them to the unsurpassed stupidity of those with whom I have had to work. And if you are able to praise any virtue in the work performed before you tonight, I thank you.

(*Bows deeply*.)

THE WICKED WANG-PAH MEETS A DRAGON

ACT I

*In the Garden of the Yamen. Stone wall at back;
pool in center of lawn. Queer, twisted Chinese
trees about. Bamboos and flowers.*

(Ko To and MEI YUNG enter, center. Ko To yawns
and stretches.)

Ko To. Oh! I am half asleep in this dull old garden. Isn't it tiresome that we, just because we are girls, must sit behind prison walls and embroider all day! I should like to be free as the women of the western barbarians are, free to——

(MEI YUNG interrupts.)

MEI YUNG. We have now more freedom than any other women of the Orient. What woman of our acquaintance has been permitted to study the language and literature of other lands as we have, through the gracious and sublime indifference of our Lord, Tu Chun, to external affairs? We have had the same advantages as our celestial mistress, his ward. You, Ko To, and I, Mei Yung, have been reared under the same roof with Mo Lan, even as sisters, and have enjoyed the same privileges of education with foreign tutors. Ungrateful one, to com-

plain of the life imposed upon us by our magnanimous Lord, Tu Chun, who treats us with the same condescension that he extends to his noble ward. For shame, Ko To!

Ko To. It is as you say: the August Lord Tu Chun's sublime indifference to all but philosophy and affairs of state has given us as much freedom as we have heretofore enjoyed in small matters, but let some matter which seems important to him arise, and you will speedily see just how limited our freedom is.

(Approaches MEI YUNG, speaks in loud whisper.)

The Severe One had something of extraordinary importance upon his mind this morning, if one might judge by the sternness of his countenance and the frightened air of Ah Kim Kam when he came to summon our mistress for a conference with his Sublimity.

(Nods apprehensively.)

I pray that it be nothing of dire import for our so-charming Mo Lan.

MEI YUNG. Fret not thyself over what does not concern thee! I happen to know in this case it does not concern the Lady, or Mo Lan either—that is, directly. He is probably informing her of what I heard the servants talking about this morning, that his illustrious son, Wang-Pah, is spending far too much time in the Lotus Tea-House. He may be asking her to devise means of making home more attractive for that wayward son of his.

Ko To. Bah! Why should Mo Lan be troubled about him? Demon Prince, that is what the servants call him behind his back. He has a soul of blackness and—*(Lowers voice to whisper)*—they say—all Can-

ton believes it, too—that Wang-Pah is really of Demon parentage and was left in the cradle a changeling on the night the good Queen Tsing Lee passed over to the happy vale of ancestral longevity.

(In tone of superiority.)

I should not believe it, for I no longer hold to the superstitions of our ancestors, but there is a sly craftiness in his look, a clever maliciousness in his behavior, which surpasses that of any human I have ever seen.

MEI YUNG. I fear your parents died too early to impart to you the information that loquacity in a maiden is the worst of the ten thousand deadly sins——

Ko To. So! Here comes our honorable lady; from her carriage and the swordlike flash of her eye, it would seem that all has not gone smoothly.

(Both bow low as MO LAN enters right, followed by her maid. PROPERTY MAN hands parasol to maid to carry over her. He then saunters forward and places seat for her and one for each of the other two. The three seat themselves and take out embroidery, while the maid holds parasol. The two bow before seating themselves. All embroider industriously in silence for a few moments.)

Ko To. *(Impetuously)* How I wish something exciting would happen!

MO LAN. *(Sorrowfully)* Something has happened, and while it may seem exciting to you, it is very unpleasant for me.

(All look at her expectantly.)

18 THE WICKED WANG-PAH MEETS A DRAGON

My honorable guardian, after due consideration, decided to consult the fortune-tellers regarding a marriage between Wang-Pah and myself. This has been done and the soothsayers declare that a wedding between us would be quite harmonious, and would help to stay Wang-Pah's frequent visits to the Lotus-Flower Tea rooms. The Honorable One believes that after Wang-Pah's marriage he will more nearly attain the one hundred virtues, and become more popular among the people as their Prince.

Ko To. He will never become more popular among the people by his own merits. What the severe and magnanimous one really intends is that your merits shall reflect credit upon him, and that the people will better tolerate him as your husband and for your sake.

Mo LAN. Alas! I would rather become a guest on high than wed one whom I do not respect and whom no one loves.

MEI YUNG. (*With a superior, pious air*) You are forgetting that he is your Prince, and the honor of being a Prince's bride should compensate you for everything else. Remember—(*closes fan emphatically*)—"Man is as heaven to give. Women is as earth to receive."

Ko To. (*Tilting chin*) You are always quoting those ancient and moth-eaten sayings of the past, Mei Yung. One would suppose, to hear you talk, that we were living during the dark ages, instead of in modern times!

Mo LAN. And if we were only living in medieval times, I should rub my wishing ring, so—(*rubs ring*)—and wish that a Wandering Knight might suddenly appear in the garden to save me from my fate.

MEI YUNG. Nonsense!

(*A scrambling is heard and the MINSTREL bounds over the wall and approaches them. All flee*

THE WICKED WANG-PAH MEETS A DRAGON 19

with little screams and hide behind trees and shrubs. The PROPERTY MAN brings forward a cushion and drops it on the floor, then hands the MINSTREL a musical instrument. The MINSTREL seats himself and strikes a few notes.)

CHORUS MAN. This is the Viceroy's true son, beloved of the Goddess of the Moon, clad as a wandering minstrel.

MINSTREL. They vanished as the gaily-colored flower-fairies vanished before the August Aunt East-Wing in the moonlit Garden of Hsuan-Wai. I shall sing. Perchance music will lay a spell on them and lure them back again.

(*He sings "The Lady Moon Is My Lover." They creep back and encircle him, MO LAN keeping farthest away.*)

*Song of Chang Chih Lo**

The Lady Moon is my lover,
My friends are the oceans four,
The heavens have roofed me over,
And the dawn is my golden door,
I would liefer follow a condor,
Or the sea-gull soaring from Ken,
Than bury my Godhead yonder,
In the dust and whirl of men.

(*He looks admiringly at Mo LAN and, rising, approaches and recites this poem to her.*)

Plum Blossom

One flower hath in itself the charms of two.
Draw nearer and she breaks to wonders new.

* Music for this.

And you might call her beauty of the rose,
 She, too, is folded in a fleece of snows:
 And you might call her pale. She doth betray
 The blush of dawn beneath the eye of day.
 The mem'ry falters and the song is naught,
 Her beauty, like the sun, dispels my thought.

(She coyly covers her face with her fan, but smiles while he speaks.)

MINSTREL. Is this Hsuan-Wei's Pavilion of Abiding Peace—and are you the spirits of the flowers that dwell therein?

KO TO. Who is Hsuan-Wei? And who are you?

MEI YUNG. Flower fairies! What are they?

MO LAN. Tell it to us; is it a story? Do you know it?

KO TO. No, no, sing again.

MINSTREL. It is a true story. Do I know it? I am only a wandering minstrel with no home, unless I may claim the great Rainbow Dome of the Moon Goddess floating through the mists of night, which I visit in my dreams, but I know all the stories, in all the languages in all the world, and my greatest happiness is to tell them to eager listeners. If life holds for me a greater joy than this, it is to sing the songs that were new when all the world was young. I have but to hear a song once and it is mine. What will you have?

MO LAN. Tell us first the tale of Hsuan-Wei and the flower people.

MINSTREL. Long, long ago in the days of the Tang dynasty there dwelt alone in a lovely garden a gentle philosopher named Hsuan-Wei. He lived peacefully and happily without human companionship among his books and flowers. One silvery night when all his garden lay white beneath the moon, and his soul was singularly serene and in harmony

with the beauty about him, he saw that every tree and shrub seemed illuminated by a spirit shining through its leaves, and with his sensitive ears he seemed to catch soft whispers of communication going on between them. Before he had time to wonder over his previous obtuseness, graceful forms glided from the various groups of flowers. Peach blossom in pink—(MINSTREL plucks peach blossom and hands it to KO TO)—the Lotus Flower in baby blue—(MINSTREL hands lotus to MEI YUNG)—and Pomegranate in crimson—(hands pomegranate to MO LAN). While the philosopher stood before them spellbound, their August Aunt East Wind eighteen times removed was announced, and appeared in gossamer, trailing robes of surpassing grace, and yet with a certain coldness of demeanor that chilled one, even when she seemed most cordial. With true Chinese courtesy, their surprised host invited them into his Pavilion of Abiding Peace and ordered delicious viands to be served. Many songs were sung and many cups went 'round, and it grieves me to say that the Lady Wind, becoming more excited and boisterous all the time, spilled much wine over poor little Pomegranate's new scarlet robe, and she, blushing and angry, left the Pavilion. Lady Wind also flew off toward the East, hissing and blustering in a great rage, and the flower fairies sorrowfully said farewell and floated from sight. The next night they returned and at their request the philosopher made a great magic and hoisted above his garden a crimson banner embroidered with a gold moon, a sun and stars. From that time on, his garden was protected from the terrible Aunt East Wind, even though without his walls the tempests tore the trees and hurled stones and whirlwinds of dust over all the rest of the world. The next midnight when the moon was full, his little flower friends came to him with leis of peach and plum blossom, whose fragrance con-

ferred upon him the eternal youth which is possessed by all lovers of flowers and by every artist. And any night by moonlight you can see him walking in his garden surrounded by gaily dressed flower fairies and the spirits of the trees.

MO LAN. It is full moon tomorrow night. Do you suppose we could see the flower fairies then?

MINSTREL. You are flower fairies, yourselves, in your lovely costumes, and why should you not be able to see your sisters?

KO TO. We are never permitted to enter the gardens by moonlight. That is why we have never seen them.

MO LAN. (*Whispering*) Tomorrow night when they think we are asleep we shall steal quietly out and look at the flowers by moonlight and—(*shyly*)—will you be there to introduce us properly? I think I might be afraid of Tiger-Lily and of that gnarled old man, Willow Tree, yonder, who looks so cross.

MINSTREL. (*Solemnly*) Yes, he is a wizard and will make passes at you with his gnarled fingers, but do not look at him at all. He cannot cast a spell upon you unless you look into his eyes. I shall be with you to protect you.

(*Discordant clanking of musical instruments, which indicates something unpleasant.*)

CHORUS MAN. Her Honorable Guardian approaches. Now Mo Lan will be in disgrace, and Wu Sun, the minstrel, in serious difficulties.

MEI YUNG. We have not been properly introduced to this wandering minstrel, and your August Guardian will be terrible in his wrath. What shall we do? What shall we do?

(*The MAIDENS tremble with fear, and fan themselves rapidly, bowing low as TU CHUN, fan-*

ning himself serenely, approaches with his followers. MINSTREL steps forward between MAIDENS and VICEROY, and bows to the ground. VICEROY closes fan with snap by a twist of wrist.)

VICEROY. Miserable worm! Who are you and how do you come to be intruding in the gardens of Tu Chun the August?

MINSTREL WU SUN. Though I am but a wandering minstrel, Kings have admitted me into their pavilions for the sake of the songs I can sing and the tales I can tell. I had no thought of intruding upon your gracious presence, but slipped over the wall to drink from your enchanted pool and to rest upon the soft grass. Now I shall go quietly away. But before I go, may I sing one song? I do not know my origin; it may be as great as your own, but this song will tell you that I put my freedom and my love of the great out-doors above the power and pomp of kings in their palaces. I do not envy you, though you may have reason to envy me. (*He sings "The Lady Moon Is My Lover."*) This song should repay you for any imposition.

VICEROY. (*Angrily*) Bold youth! You have dared to address me as an equal! (*Pompously*) You shall not go away quietly, as you had hoped, to continue your nefarious and impudent career. The very existence of such as you is an insult to such as I. At dawn tomorrow you shall die!

(*Opens fan with a snap by one twist of wrist, and fans himself.*)

COUNSELLOR. Gracious Administrator! Tomorrow is the fifteenth day of the eighth month, and the Festival of the Moon Goddess.

VICEROY. It is true! I had forgotten. Day after

tomorrow at latest the world shall be rid of your affronting presence.

(To Soldier.)

Conduct him to the palace prison.

(As the guards take him past, MO LAN slips into his hand the pomegranate blossom from her hair, and whispers softly:)

MO LAN. By moonlight.

(VICEROY does not see this as he is talking to COUNSELLOR.)

VICEROY. Undutiful girl, has this fellow exchanged any word with you?

(MO LAN falls on her knees without a word and tremblingly hides her face. VICEROY'S gaze rests on KO TO. MEI YUNG assumes a self-righteous look.)

KO TO. How could we speak to him, your gracious Majesty? We had not been properly introduced!

(Gives MEI YUNG a saucy wink behind her fan.)

VICEROY. True. Since this barbarian learning is piercing the stronghold of our civilization, it is difficult to predict what unseemly behavior will come next on the part of our women. It is best that no delay be permitted in the marriage arrangements. I shall have the fortune-tellers consulted tomorrow and the marriage shall take place at the first suitable date.

(VICEROY and followers make an honorable exit, right, fanning themselves as they go.)

KO TO. *(Excitedly)* Well! Something has happened at last!

MO LAN. *(Sadly)* Yes, something has happened, but I think I shall never smile again!

(KO TO and MEI YUNG stand on either side of MO LAN, a little behind her, making picture as curtain falls.)

CURTAIN

(CHORUS MAN appears in front of curtain and bows.)

CHORUS MAN. For your generous appreciation, I bow! It is better that you mitigate the fervor of your adulation until later scenes, else my actors will become lazy and the performance will be spoiled. They are but children, and I would not have their foolish heads turned by too much praise. Moderate your raptures, I beg of you, and you will be the gainers thereby. I thank you.

(Bows and exits.)

ACT II

(CRORUS MAN *appears between curtains and bows.*)

CHORUS MAN. Magnanimous ones, do not be disheartened by the turn which events have taken. I have other characters in reserve, who have not yet appeared in this play. Have patience and all will yet be well. The next scene will be laid in a prison on the Yamen Grounds of the Viceroy. I bow in apology for the poverty and sordidness of the scene. It is the only one of this kind. I bow.

(*Bows and stands aside as curtain rises.*)

SCENE I

Screen with bars across stage at one side. Garden remains at other side toward back; ladder leads down from balcony above, representing Heaven, or PROPERTY MAN puts ladder there when MOON GODDESS wishes to descend. Stage almost dark. Clanking of chains. GUARDS bring in MINSTREL, bound with chains, and thrust him into prison.

FIRST GUARD. (*Shakes him*) We will teach you to walk into the Yamen grounds and proclaim yourself equal to the Imperishable One! Perhaps you would not like to change places with him now?

SECOND GUARD. (*Shakes prisoner also*) Now your astounding impertinence in shrilling forth your intimacy with the Sun, Moon and Stars will be fittingly punished. Perhaps the Lady Moon, whom you so

audaciously asservate is your lover, will send a moon-beam fairy to release you.

FIRST GUARD. More likely she will strike you dead with one of her golden shafts. Tonight they celebrate the Festival of the Moon Goddess, you know.

SECOND GUARD. By our honored ancestor, Kong-Fu-Tse, what was that which the gracious and charitable Lady Mo Lan in pity slipped to you as you passed her? If it was a gold piece and you let us have it without a struggle, we will leave the prison gate unlocked for an hour tonight while the prison guard is eating his rice.

FIRST GUARD. Yes, money covers a multitude of sins.

(MINSTREL *refuses to answer them. Both spring at him and, after a terrific struggle, wrest from him a pomegranate flower which they throw contemptuously on the floor.*)

SECOND GUARD. Bah! a flower! I should not have taken the trouble to close my fingers upon it. You are, indeed, an imbecile. From the way your eyes glistened, I thought it could have been no less than a priceless ruby. Poor fool! We leave you now to dream of the Lady Mo Lan. She is really no farther above you than the Lady Moon! Ha! Ha!

(*They go out, jeering. It grows darker. MINSTREL picks up the flower from the floor and puts it to his lips. Comes to the bars and leans against them, looking out at the sky and the flowers.*)

MINSTREL. The darkness of the night is but as the darkness of my despair.

(*Pause.*)

That uncouth Guard spake only truth when he said the Lady Mo Lan is no farther from me than the Lady Moon. Who is my father? I know not. I am without ancestors—without wealth—without power. Even the poor peasants who reared me knew nothing of me, save that I was brought to them one night at full moon by a tall woman with shining eyes. Now they are gone and I am utterly alone and desolate. I know not my origin. Today I have faced one of noblest birth and have felt within me a spirit like unto his own. I do not fear him. I could even challenge him to deadly combat, but that is impossible, for I am only a wandering minstrel, a mere vagabond. Today for the first time I have gazed into eyes limpid as pools at midnight, and like the waters, dark with mystery. I shall try to forget her, but I see the bamboo move and the melody of her motion is before my eyes. I faint with the breath of her presence in the fragrance of the plumaria. The wings of distant swallows black against the sunset sky are her brows, and the Gold of Ophir roses with their delicate flush are her golden cheeks. I can never forget her even though I would. Though ten thousand hills were between us and the turbulent waters of the four oceans should divide us, she is with me. Too true is the tale of our childhood that men and women cannot succeed alone but, like the fabulous one-winged birds, can only fly together. From now on, my life alone is but half a life.

(MINSTREL takes up musical instrument, brought by
PROPERTY MAN, and plays and sings.)

*A Word from the Wind **

There is some one of whom I keep a-thinking,
There is some one whom I visit in my dreams,

* From an ancient Chinese ballad, Fourth Century, A.D. Music can be furnished for this upon request.

Tho a hundred hills stand sentinel between us,
And the dark rage of a hundred sunless streams,
For the same bright moon is kind to us,
And the same untrammelled wind to us,
Daring a hundred hills,
Whispers the word that thrills
And the dust of my heart laid bare
Shows the lilies that linger there.

(Stage grows darker at first. Then gradually is lighted by the rising of the moon in the background. PROPERTY MAN has immense Golden Moon on long pole. He stands outside stone wall and raises it slowly, higher and higher, until it is about eight feet in the air. He holds it in position for a few seconds and attaches it to some nails which will hold it. WU SUN motions to PROPERTY MAN to bring him a cushion and drops on his knees before the moon. The Prison GUARD is sleeping at one side of entrance.)

MINSTREL. (Prays) O golden and gracious one! Chang Ngo, tonight, if thou so deignest, lean from thy drifting Palace of Gold to hear a lover's prayer. Fair Goddess, thy silvery light casts the glamor of romance and poetry over the shattered dreams of Emperors and Kings, over the broken remains of ruined cities. Lovers separated by a hundred hills, lonely in desolation, are linked in thought as they gaze upon thy shimmering light and think upon each other. Thou knowest I have no fear of wandering across the Hills of Longevity in my youth, but grant that if I must lose my liberty, this miserable life may be taken away at once. And grant besides, Great Goddess, that my singing soul may become a nightingale to haunt these woodlands and on moonlit nights may be poured forth in worship of thee, O Goddess, and of the maid I love. Let me see my

loved one and comfort her grief but once before I pass, and I care not by what road I am bidden to depart. As I, gazing upon the moonlight now, remember all the lovers of past ages who were blessed by the moonlight, may lovers in the years to come think of Mo Lan, loveliest of maidens, and Wu Sun, the wandering minstrel.

(MINSTREL lies down on a piece of matting, and falls asleep. PROPERTY MAN slips a block under his head. The MOON GODDESS, preceded by two maidens, and followed by two others, comes down the ladder from heaven. The PROPERTY MAN assists by holding the ladder.)

CHORUS MAN. (*Seems frightened. Addresses audience*) Wu Sun is dreaming. You are dreaming. I am dreaming. It is never vouchsafed to mortals to see the Moon Goddess except when they are dreaming. We may not look upon the Gods with mortal eyes and live; therefore, it is better that we should be asleep and dreaming.

(The MOON GODDESS and her MAIDENS speak no word but, clothed in silver and gossamer, they dance a lovely dance—now swiftly, now slowly, but always gracefully. At the close, they steal softly into the prison, the PROPERTY MAN opening the door for them, and surround the sleeping MINSTREL. The MOON GODDESS takes from her neck an amulet of silver and opal, and clasps it gently 'round his neck without awakening him. Then they glide softly out, mount the ladder and vanish to heaven. The stage gradually grows light. A bird calls. PROPERTY MAN blows bird whistle. The MINSTREL awakens with a smile and an exalted look.)

MINSTREL. (*Dazed*) The Moon Goddess . . . Prison walls . . . Chains. Her coming was all a dream.

(*Then he puts his hand to throat, raises the amulet and looks at it. Speaks joyfully.*)

No; It was true!

CURTAIN

(CHORUS MAN appears between curtains and bows.)

CHORUS MAN. Exalted ones! It has been your unprecedented privilege to see the dance of the Moon Goddess and her maidens which, never since the time of the Tang dynasty, has been witnessed by mortals, and then only by an Emperor, the Celestial Tang Min Huang, in a dream. You are indeed honored. I shall not be surprised if other marvels meet your eyes before the play ends. Be prepared for many strange and marvelous sights. I bow.

(*Exits.*)

ACT II

SCENE II

(CHORUS MAN *appears between curtains and bows.*)

CHORUS MAN. Illustrious ones! You are about to behold a banquet of The Festival of the Moon Goddess in the Garden of the Yamen of the Viceroy. It is an auspicious occasion and those to whom the pleasures of the palate are dear may look forward to much vicarious enjoyment of the richest viands. I hasten my footsteps that you may not suffer suspense.

(*Bows and stands at one side as curtain rises.*)

(*The Garden of the Yamen. High up at the back is a full harvest moon. A wistaria arbor stands center. Lovely-colored gorgeous lanterns hang in the arbor and on trees. Musicians at one side. Table is set in arbor for the VICEROY, the DEMON PRINCE, and guests of honor. Other men guests are scattered around the garden. Servants enter and pass rich viands. All eat with chopsticks.*)

GUEST. Never before has it been my delight to taste a dish of such delicacy.

VICEROY TU CHUN. I am indeed honored that this simple fare delights you.

GUEST. Would that I might fill with golden sand the hands of the inventive deviser of that dish.

VICEROY. It is really of no importance.

GUEST. The stomach loves surprises, and mine has been completely overwhelmed with amazement.

VICEROY. The man who has pleased the palates of my esteemed guests shall not lack a reward. Summon him before us.

(*SERVANT bows low and exits left, to return immediately, alone.*)

SERVANT. Gracious master, the modest but marvelous person who prepared this dish begs me to state that the pleasure of your honored guest and of your beneficent self is an ample reward. He is not one to present a quince in the hope of receiving a gem.

VICEROY. Out of my presence, invidious insect! Does he dare to infer that I am one to receive a ruby and repay it with a "painted cake"? Bring him before us. He shall receive whatever reward he will, even unto the half of my province—or he shall "salute the age" and "join the dwellers in the peaceful sunlight of the Nine Springs."

(*SERVANT bows and exits, to return with the trembling MO LAN. The PROPERTY MAN brings a cushion and she falls on her knees before the VICEROY.*)

Unhappy maiden! Are you so lost to the high teachings of Kong-Fu-Tse that you set at naught his saying: "If a girl does no harm it is enough; you cannot expect her to be either good or useful." Almost daily I find you to be one or the other.

MO LAN. Honorable Guardian! Pardon my bold behavior. I did not expect it to come to your in-

effable ears. Today I am so overcome with grief that had I been unable to employ myself in the preparations for your guests, I had by mine own hand gone to the Vale of Ancestral Longevity. You know what my heart would ask—that which you will not grant. I have no other request. Permit me to depart.

VICEROY. My word is not to be broken. I have promised you a reward. Speak!

MO LAN. Gracious Guardian. In the western barbarian lands in days of knighthood, the hand of a maiden of high rank was often awarded to the knight who could win it in deadly combat with some fierce monster. Though the Dragon is never seen, we know it exists, for it embellishes great works of art in the Flowery Kingdom. Let him who would win my hand, to prove his worth, seek and bring home a Dragon. If there be one in prison under sentence of death who has the courage to face a fiery dragon—perhaps he is not so unworthy. Open the contest to all. Then your miraculously endowed son, if he wins me, will be able to vaunt his superiority and prowess over all in the Kingdom, and perhaps he will not value me less for the efforts he will have made. I would be won by the worthiest. It is but the idle vanity of a girl.

VICEROY. It is, indeed, such a request as we might have expected from one of the contemptible ones, yet with a certain amount of subtlety about it. However, as I am sure of the valor of my son, and, as I have given my word, your boon is granted. Go!

(Exit MO LAN, right.)

My son, your wedding is postponed.

WANG-PAH. It is truly said, "The ingenuity of a guileless woman can undermine nine mountains!" However, in order to render the mind of the modest

and self-deprecatory Mo Lan at ease with regard to my august esteem for her and with regard to her future situation in life, for the uncertainty of whether she is to be the ignoble wife of a wanderer or to occupy the elevated position of consort to a Prince of the highest refinement and extraordinary wealth of—modesty hinders the mention of more personal characteristics, such as a moon-resembling face and a royal nature which brooks not to be crossed in even the smallest details, this uncertainty, I repeat, must be a great strain on the delicate mind of a maiden. Hence I shall start on the quest at once and before the Moon Goddess has hung out her sky lantern for the second time, I shall return with the greatest of Dragons to gladden the heart of the fearful Mo Lan. As a precaution, I would suggest that the mendicant minstrel continue his rest behind the bars until the reappearance of the sky lantern. This will prevent his sudden and ignominious decapitation at my hands before he possesses the sublime opportunity of seeing a Dragon.

VICEROY. *(Motions WANG-PAH to be seated)* With regard to Death, the adage, "It is better to die two years too soon than to live one year too long," is well known to you, my son. In my position as judge, the unfortunate necessity of impartiality compels me to offer all contestants, though of unequal rank, the opportunity of starting upon their quests within the same hour.

(Claps hands. SERVANT appears left, and bows low.)

At dawn, convey the intelligence to the minstrel in his cell, that he is freed in order that he may start upon the quest to slay a Dragon. If he fail, death is the penalty. If he win, death, too, will be the reward, for, although he win the hand of the maiden Mo Lan, he is of lower rank and may not

36 THE WICKED WANG-PAH MEETS A DRAGON

live to enjoy his insolent triumph. We will generously furnish him with a cloak, a horse, a sword, and provisions for his journey. Bring me the ignominious reply of this lower than a worm to our magnanimous condescension.

(SERVANT bows again and exits, right.)

My son, work may be hastened, but not food. Let us have more of the humble dish which our honored guests call delicious. Fill up the glasses! Let music play. Dismiss all withering responsibilities from our minds and rejoice in the present.

CURTAIN

(CHORUS MAN appears and bows.)

CHORUS MAN. Gracious admirers! All I can think of at this crisis is an old saying: "A man knows, but a woman knows better." Often the sayings of the philosophers are all that sustain us in times of tremendous upheaval. I must retire to think this over. Pray excuse me.

(Bows and exits.)

ACT III

(CHORUS MAN appears before curtain.)

CHORUS MAN. The next scene is laid under the sea. Here it is that the great Dragon makes his home. No mortal can live beneath the sea, but Wang-Pah is a demon and Wu Sun wears the amulet of the Moon Goddess, so they have an equal chance to overcome the great Dragon. Wang-Pah is a coward, but Wu Sun, on the other hand, is no warrior; he is a poet, so their chances are even. I cannot let my Property Man go beneath the sea to carry weapons or sustenance to them. He is not a fish or a turtle, though he is as evasive as the one and as slow as the other.

(Roar is heard.)

Now comes the great Dragon! Watch with all your august eyes.

SCENE I

(Green gauze or net curtain hung in front of stage. CREATURES OF SEA enter—fish, lobster, clam, turtle, frog. Seaweeds stand in corners. Green and blue lights. Chorus and PROPERTY MAN stand at either side, outside of "sea." Curtain rises.)

(The DRAGON, propelled by five boys, appears, and the small creatures of the sea scuttle out of the

38 THE WICKED WANG-PAH MEETS A DRAGON

way. WANG-PAH appears and, rolling up sleeves, grasps weapon in both hands, and, with a yell, darts at DRAGON. DRAGON roars, blows smoke from nostrils, and WANG-PAH walks swiftly backward. He makes several sallies toward the DRAGON, brandishing his sword, but each time the DRAGON roars and blows smoke, and he retreats without a stroke of the sword.)

WANG-PAH. I must retire and think out a stragem. More can always be accomplished by skill and forethought than by a vulgar display of strength and noise.

(Exits right. Enter WU SUN.)

WU SUN. Here is the Dragon at last! A poet's dream fulfilled! At last to meet a real Dragon, which I had supposed existed only in dreams and in the tales told to children. Now, my fine fellow, here's to you!

(Salutes with sword.)

I don't want to kill you, particularly if you are the last of your species, but dead or alive, you must accompany me to the Yamen of the Viceroy to show him before my death that though I am low in rank and despised by him, I have the courage to face dragons, even to satisfy the whim of a maiden.

(The Dragon roars and blows smoke.)

Around my neck is the amulet of the Goddess Chang Ngo. The waters rise and fall at her command, the darkness flees before her. Truly she is a powerful goddess and her amulet should protect me even from the fiery breath of dragons.

THE WICKED WANG-PAH MEETS A DRAGON 39

(He presses amulet to his lips, girds up his mantle and, sword in hand, attacks Dragon with successive swift sword-thrusts. Dragon roars and opens and closes fiery mouth, snorts smoke, moves from side to side trying to escape rain of blows, and then dashes straight at WU SUN. WU SUN leaps upon rock and Dragon clammers up side, so that WU SUN cannot escape. WU SUN plunges sword into head with all his strength, but cannot extricate it. Then he pulls off amulet and rubs it between palms over Dragon's head vigorously, and, raising his eyes to heaven, speaks this prayer to the MOON GODDESS fervently in Chinese)

Yuet-lo, yuet-lo, tsing-nei fai-loy koa-ngo ko tiu tung sup-fun lei-hoi, Tsing nei loi sao sup-ken.

(The Dragon falls limply to the floor. WANG-PAH comes quietly upon the swordless WU SUN from the rear and stabs him in the back. WU SUN falls across the Dragon. WANG-PAH takes the amulet from WU SUN's neck and clasps it around his own, then leaps upon the rock and addresses the audience.)

WANG-PAH. "Many times man reckons up accounts, but heaven reckons once, and once for all." You will be relieved to see that wit and ingenuity can overcome bulk and bravado. You may await the next scene with serenity.

CURTAIN

(CHORUS MAN appears between curtains and bows.)

CHORUS MAN. I bow my haughty head in humble acknowledgment that all is not as it should be. The wicked Wang-Pah has triumphed and has even taken

40 THE WICKED WANG-PAH MEETS A DRAGON

the sacred and powerful charm of Chang-Ngo from our hero's neck; our Dragon, which is supposed to be immortal, has succumbed to this mighty amulet. Our hero is dead. Our heroine will die when this comes to her ears; thus our play has one more scene to be produced, without a hero, a heroine or a Dragon. But in this last thought lies our salvation—the play is not yet done. Much may yet be accomplished before the end. I humbly beseech you to stay until the end. I thank you.

(Bows and exits.)

SCENE II

(CHORUS MAN appears and bows.)

CHORUS MAN. Honorable guests, I am too upset to talk. I shall let my players do what they can to bring order out of chaos. This is the end. I bow.

(Curtain rises.)

(Garden in the Yamen of TU CHUN. TU CHUN seated in high-backed chair on left. SERVANT holds umbrella over him. MO LAN seated right with maidens standing beside her. Umbrella boy holds umbrella over her. Dragon lies stretched out before them on left. WANG-PAH stands between Dragon and TU CHUN and explains.)

WANG-PAH. Dragons are to me no more than silkworms, and when I saw that this execrable monster had taken the life of the mendicant minstrel, to whom you had so generously granted his freedom, I could not restrain my fury and, with one stroke, I thrust my good sword through his iridescent eye, the eye being the most vulnerable part of a Dragon, and there he lies.

KO TO. *(Aside to MO LAN, with a chuckle)* And there the Demon lies, if I am not mistaken.

MEI YUNG. *(Raps her fan)* Sh!

TU CHUN. Honorable son, Wang-Pah, you have shown yourself a worthy descendant of the line of Tu. *(To SERVANTS, who go out, right.)* Bring

forth the gilded garments worn by the princes of our house on ceremonial days.

MO LAN, my Golden lily-flower, thy boon is granted. Behold the Dragon lying dead before thee, and beside him the heroic knight who slew him single-handed. Today I consult the soothsayers and make immediate preparations for thy wedding. What more could any maiden ask?

MO LAN. My Honored Guardian! More than parent to me, I ask but one favor more ere my marriage: grant that I may look but once upon the dead face of the minstrel who lost his life in trying to fulfil my foolish fancy, and let fitting funeral rites be performed over his body.

TU CHUN. (To WANG-PAH) Is his body near at hand?

WANG-PAH. It is without the door. I brought it with the Dragon's body as evidence of my brave deed.

(PROPERTY MAN hands mandarin coat to SERVANTS, who put it on WANG-PAH, who struts complacently in it. WANG-PAH steps to door and motions. Bearers bring in body of WU SUN on stretcher, draped in white. They carry it across the stage at back to left, then halt.)

WANG-PAH. (Sneeringly) If that fair goddess, Chang-Ngo, could but see her favorite now! She might at least shed a few moonbeams upon him in lieu of tears. Would that the deities fulfilled their promises to men!

(As WANG-PAH says this, clang, crash, goes the orchestra and the MOON GODDESS and her MAIDENS suddenly appear above, unobserved by actors. The eyes of the MOON GODDESS are large

with anger. MO LAN steps from her seat; stands at the side of the body of WU SUN.)

MEI YUNG. (Tries to stop her) Imprudent one, consider!

MO LAN. (Silencing MEI YUNG with a gesture) Wang-Pah, son of my August Guardian, hearken well to my words. They are the last words that you shall hear from my unworthy lips. "Though he bar with gold his silver door, a man cannot keep the wife that loves him not." Though you have in some occult way slain the Dragon and though through some mischance this minstrel master of melody and music has been slain by him, he has won and you have lost my heart. Forgive me, my more than Father! I cannot live without him.

(She reaches down and takes the MINSTREL's dagger and raises it on high.)

And with this sword I gladly go to join him in the drifting palaces of white moonlight among the jewelled stars.

(All seem frozen. Before she can bring the weapon down, the MOON GODDESS appears on the other side alone, with hand upraised. All shrink back. MO LAN drops her dagger. CHANG NGO makes a few passes over the Dragon and he revives. The Dragon, using megaphone to give loud tone, gives deprecatory cough and speaks.)

THE DRAGON. Gracious Administrator, will you in your magnanimous condescension grant me a few moments of speech? I know it is not in the established order of things for a dragon to open his mouth in speech, but the agility with which your son, miraculously endowed with a forked tongue, is able to

twist the truth into quite its opposite, has so deeply moved me that I cannot remain silent. In the first place, he claims to have killed me. Know, oh, irreproachable ones, that is improbable, impossible, and totally imaginary on his part. According to the ancient philosophers, the dragon is like water. "Strike it—you hurt it not. Stab it—you cause no wound. Apply fire to it—it will not burn." Greater than Leviathan, yet like the water it can slip between barriers, can conquer all obstacles. It can descend to unfathomable depths; it can rise to the Gates of Heaven. The Dragon is a symbol of the human soul in its powers and aspirations, and that you can never destroy. Do not deceive yourself, oh, Demon One. In the second place, I yielded not to this cowardly braggart, but to the charm of the Moon Goddess which I recognized in the hands of the high-born minstrel. At the moment when he stood facing me unarmed, he was basely stabbed in the back by the imposter who faces you now in Prince's clothing. Had he dropped the amulet of the Moon Goddess, the blow had not prevailed against him, and even now were the Demon Prince forced to give up the amulet which he has slipped about his own nefarious neck, the true heir of the vulnerable Tu Chun might yet revive.

TU CHUN. (*To WANG-PAH*) True heir! Do not fear our imperial anger, but speak straight forward. I have long suspected that all was not as it should be when I noticed the malignant disposition of our son—so different from my own.

THE DRAGON. Thy son and this evil creature arose from widely different stock, but were exchanged in their cradles by vicious spirits. There lies thy heir, the poet Wu Sun, slain by the treachery of the Demon Wang-Pah.

TU CHUN. (*Sorrowfully*) My son! My son!

MO LAN. My lover!

(*Sinks on her knees beside him.*)

KO TO. (*Makes a dash at WANG-PAH*) Didst hear the Dragon? Give up the amulet or I will tear it from thy throat!

(*WANG-PAH contemptuously but fearfully throws it to KO TO, and she runs to MO LAN and thrusts it into her hands.*)

Be quick!

(*MO LAN gently puts it 'round WU SUN's neck, and he sits up in a dazed way and gazes about. He and MO LAN, oblivious of the others, begin to talk together in low tones.*)

WANG-PAH. (*Smoothly and loftily*) This mantle is too ornate (*removes it and SERVANT passes it to another SERVANT, who puts it on WU SUN*). The weight of this jewelled head-dress on my delicate brow is oppressive. (*Removes it and it is put on WU SUN.*) I have long preferred a life of elegant simplicity to the vulgar ostentation of court life. Now I shall avail myself of the first opportunity to retire from this court where those of superior attainments are held in subjection to "Stupid Thorns." My honorable but slow-witted foster-father, and others of lesser capabilities who are gathered about him; you have listened with the utmost gullibility to the most unpleasant insinuations made by "this preposterous flying monster which in reality does not exist." I pity you for your simplicity. Had it not been for the inopportune arrival of the Moon Goddess, this wholly superfluous winged Dragon would have been unable to utter a syllable and this play would have had quite a different ending.

46 THE WICKED WANG-PAH MEETS A DRAGON

CHORUS MAN. (*Visibly impressed, to the audience*) That is quite, quite true.

WANG-PAH. May I offer one suggestion both to the August Tu Chun and the complacent Wu Sun—that is, that the proper place for the skirts and ornaments is at the back of the house. Also, "Flowers in a mirror, and a moon in a stream, do not last." I do not envy you your short-lived joy, Wu Sun.

(WU SUN does not hear this at all.)

For a "sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier days." (*To CHORUS MAN*) May I merely extend to the audience my utmost sympathy for their disappointment in the unexpected turn which events have taken? As Kong-Fu-Tse has so feelingly said: "Even a silver trumpet cannot prevail over a score of brazen horns."

Ko To. Nobody blames you for being too polite.

(*MEI YUNG raps her with fan. WANG-PAH fans himself and, sauntering slowly and insolently, passes around the room and out, bowing. All bow politely in return.*)

Ko To. (*As he passes her*) Do not delay the wheels of your chariot on my account.

MEI YUNG. (*Admiringly, with exalted eyes*) How noble, how self-effacing, like ice in water!

(*The lovers do not see nor hear WANG-PAH.*)

CHORUS MAN. (*To audience*) The wise tortoise keeps his pain inside.

TU CHUN. (*Wisely and pompously, as though speaking for Heaven*) Many times man reckons up accounts, but Heaven reckons once and once for all, is at this time a not inappropriate sentiment.

THE WICKED WANG-PAH MEETS A DRAGON 47

(*Nods ponderously. The lovers continue to talk, and everyone gets up and leaves the stage, leaving them entirely alone. Even the Dragon goes out. They continue to talk for a moment and finally discover that they are alone and look around them surprised, then look at each other in a foolish sort of way and smile.*)

Curtail falls.

(*Curtain rises again—MOON GODDESS stands on height back of lovers, smiling, with two maidens, one on either side. Other players appear at sides and back. Four sea creatures scuttle across stage, followed by Dragon.*)

CURTAIN

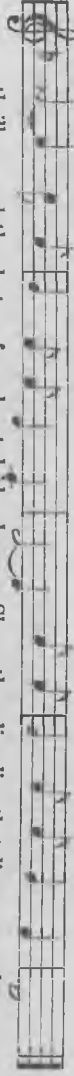
(*CHORUS MAN appears and bows.*)

Faithful and long-suffering friends, who have sat here patiently until the end, and have followed the peregrinations of my poor players through the tortuous and twisted trails which had led them at last to the happy ending, which we had hoped for from the first. If you have enjoyed the play, we feel ourselves more amply rewarded by your rapture than by your bank rolls. We hope you will generously scatter the good tidings of your appreciation among your friends that they, too, may participate in your pleasure. For your gracious and celestial patronage, I bow again for the last time.

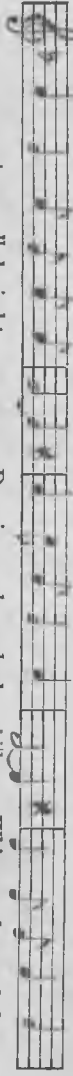
(*Bows three times, right, left, and center. Grand finale from orchestra.*)

THE END

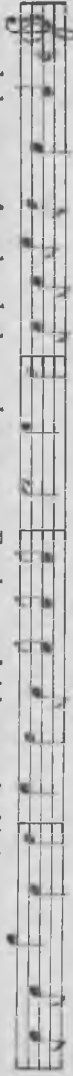
thrills and the dust of my heart laid bare Shows the li-lies that ling-er there.



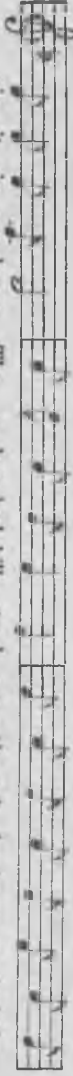
same un-trammelled wind to us, Dar-ing a hun-dred hills, Whis-pers the word that



dark rage of a hun-dred sun-less streams. For the same bright moon is kind to us and the



vis-it in my dreams, Tho a hun-dred hills stand sen-ti-nel be-tween us, And the



There is some one of whom I keep a think-ing, There is some one whom I



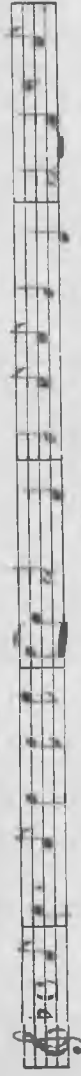
"A WORD FROM THE WIND"

Music adapted from an Old Chinese Chant by Major WALTER MAYGROVE

"THE LADY MOON" or, "A WORLD APART"

Words by CHANG CHIH-Ho, circa, A. D. 750

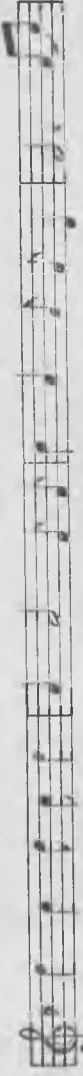
Air by Major WALTER MAYGROVE



The La-dy Moon is my lov-er, My friends are the o-ceans four, The



hea-vens have roofed me o-ver, And the dawn is my gold-en door, I would



lie-fer fol-low a con-dor, Or the sea-gull soaring from ken, Then



bu-ry my God head yon-der In the dust and whirl of men.

Clarence

Comedy in 4 acts by Booth Tarkington. 5 males, 5 females. 2 interiors. Costumes, modern. Plays $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

One of the "five million", Clarence served where he was sent—though it was no further than Texas. As an entomologist he found—on this side of the ocean—no field for his specialty, so they set him to driving mules.

Now, reduced to civil life and seeking a job, he finds a position in the home of one Wheeler, a wealthy man with a family. And because he'd "been in the army" he becomes guide, philosopher and friend to the members of that distracted family group. Clarence's position is an anomalous one. He mends the plumbing, tunes the piano, types—off stage—and plays the saxophone. And around him revolves such a group of characters as only Booth Tarkington could offer. It is a real American comedy, at which the audience ripples with appreciative and delighted laughter.

Those marvelous young people, Cora and Bobby, are portrait sketches warranted to appeal to everyone.

Royalty, \$25.00. Price, 75 cents.

The Charm School

Comedy in 3 acts by Alice Duer Miller and Robert Milton. 6 males, 10 females. (May be played by 5 males and 8 females). (Any number of school girls may be used in the ensembles). 2 interiors. Costumes, modern. Plays $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

A young automobile salesman just out of his 'teens inherits a girl's school and insists on running it himself, according to his own ideas, chief of which is that the dominant feature in the education of the young girl of today should be CHARM.

In the end the young man gives up the school and promises to wait until the youngest of his pupils reaches a marriageable age.

"The Charm School" has the freshness of youth, the inspiration of a novel idea, the charm of originality, and wholesome, amusing entertainment. We strongly recommend it for high school production.

First produced in New York, then toured the country. Two companies now playing it in England. Royalty, \$25.00. Price, 75 cents.

A Full House

Farceical comedy in 3 acts. By Fred Jackson. 7 males, 7 females. 1 interior. Modern costumes. Plays $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours. This newest and funniest farce was written by Fred Jackson, the well-known story writer, and is backed up by the prestige of an impressive New York success and the promise of unlimited fun presented in the most attractive form. A cleverer farce has not been seen for many a long day. "A Full House" is a house full of laughs. Royalty, \$25. Price, 75 cents.

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